

REMARKS

Reconsideration of the present application is respectfully requested.

Claims 1, 3-9 and 11-15 previously presented for examination remain in the application. Claims 2 and 10 have been canceled and claims 1 and 9 amended to expedite allowance. Claims 11 and 12 have been amended to correct minor informalities. No new claims have been added.

Claims 1, 3 and 6-8 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being considered to be unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,666,541 to Sellers ("Sellers") in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,264,992 to Hogdahl et al. ("Hogdahl"), and U.S. Patent No 5,835,083 to Nielsen et al. ("Nielsen").

Claims 4 and 5 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being considered to be unpatentable over Sellers in view of Hogdahl and Nielsen, and what was considered to be well-known in the art, as exemplified by JP Patent No. 11-232733 to Hongo et al. ("Hongo").

Claim 9 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being considered to be anticipated by Sellers in view of Nielsen.

Claims 14 and 15 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being considered to be unpatentable over Sellers in view of Nielsen and what was considered to be well-known in the art, as exemplified by Hongo.

Claims 2 and 10-13 stand objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but were indicated as being allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Claim 1 has been amended to incorporate the limitations of claim 2, thereby making claim 1 equivalent in scope to claim 2 being rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Similarly, claim 9 has been amended to incorporate the limitations of claim 10, thereby making claim 9 equivalent in scope to claim 10 being rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Claims 3-8 and claims 10-15 depend from and further limit claims 1 and 9, respectively, and thus should also be found to be in condition for allowance.

If the Examiner disagrees or believes that further discussion will expedite prosecution of this case, the Examiner is invited to telephone applicants' representative at the number indicated below.

If there are any charges, please charge Deposit Account No. 50-0221.

Respectfully submitted,

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CERTIFICATE OF TRANSMISSION
(37 C.F.R. § 1.8(a))

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